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FAA CONTROLLERS SAY MORALE AT LOWEST SINCE 1981

Air traffic controllers last Friday told a House subcommittee the post-PATCO strike "gung ho" attitude has been replaced by low morale and that the system itself may be "strained to the point of collapse." Testifying before the House investigations and oversight subcommittee, four controllers from the Los Angeles, Calif. and Leesburg, Va. ATC facilities said they were "tired of working overtime." They also complained about the number of inexperienced controllers and the poor management.

Federal Aviation Administrator J. Lynn Helms disagreed with the controllers' testimony, stating that controller "morale is good." He stressed that the ATC system is safe, but admitted that FAA had human relations problems which are being studied by a new Quality Assurance Division. The division is currently taking a "hard look at the quality of our new controllers" and assessing the quality of ATC operations.

John O'Hara, general counsel to the subcommittee, said he had talked to a number of controllers over the past four months and had "picked up a feeling of frustration." Controllers complain that phones at the Los Angeles ATC facility are "tapped," controller errors are ignored "on a regular basis," a six day work week—while not on the schedule—is expected, morale is at its lowest since 1981, and the controllers are talking about forming a new union. O'Hara said he could have filled the hearing room with controllers who had complaints, except that they all fear retribution.

O'Hara also played a tape recording of an exchange between two air traffic controllers at Los Angeles International who were handling a Western Airlines DC-10 and a military KC-10. The tape indicates that one controller had cleared the Western flight to take off on Runway 24L unaware that the military aircraft was making an approach to the same runway. After a tense conversation between the local and departure controllers, the situation was resolved by ordering the military flight to climb to 3,000 feet altitude while the Western flight was restricted to 1,500 feet.

HELMS SUBMITS RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS RAISED BY DOT

FAA Administrator J. Lynn Helms last Thursday submitted his response to a series of questions from the Transportation Department's deputy general counsel concerning allegations about Helms' personal financial interests. In an Oct. 11 memo to Helms, Rosalind A. Knapp of DOT said a number of allegations in an Oct. 7 *Wall Street Journal* article "raise concern with respect to the three Public Financial Disclosure Reports (SF 278) that you have filed with this office." The seven-page memo asked a detailed series of questions about Helms' financial interests in several companies and sought clarification of a number of areas including loans to and payments by Helms and an associate in amounts ranging from $100,000 to $500,000.

Helms' response to the DOT inquiry was originally due Oct. 24, but DOT officials said he received a two-day extension and finally submitted his response last Thursday. A DOT spokesman indicated Helms' response would be released to the public, but he said DOT officials were still reviewing the information last Friday afternoon. "We are being very careful to review his responses to make sure we don't release things that aren't releaseable," the spokesman said, adding that, "he may have submitted information that is personal and nobody's business."

In addition to the DOT investigation, Sen. Nancy Kassebaum (R-Kan.) has asked the Justice Depart-

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HELMS' RESPONSE *(Cont.)*
ment to investigate the allegations made in the newspaper report *(BA, Oct. 24/130).* A Kassebaum aide said Friday Justice had still not responded to that request.

FAA PLAN WOULD CLOSE 104 FSS FACILITIES BY END OF 1986 – Federal Aviation Administration has provided some details of its plan to consolidate air traffic facilities including a proposal to close one-third of the nation's flight service stations (FSS) by the end of fiscal 1986 and reduce the total number of FSS facilities from the current 317 to 61 by 1993. Automation equipment to be installed at the remaining "modernized" FSS locations would permit pilots telephone access to computer systems or FSS personnel to obtain weather briefings or to file flight plans.

Testifying last week before a House transportation appropriations subcommittee, FAA Administrator J. Lynn Helms said the automated FSSs would "provide a level of service which is equal to or better than that currently available." He said implementation of the plan, which includes closing ATC towers, consolidating TRACON/ARTCC functions, realigning airway facilities sector offices (AFSOs) and consolidating aviation standards (AVS) field offices *(see chart on the back of this page)*, would result in savings of $250 million by 1993. Approximately 80 percent of those savings would be achieved through personnel reductions, Helms said.

Although few disputed the need to modernize the FSSs, congressmen and aviation groups criticized various aspects of FAA's plan. Congressmen testified before the subcommittee objecting to the proposed FSS closures in their districts. The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association and the Central Florida General Aviation Association said safety and service would be reduced by closing the FSSs and replacing flight service specialists with "telephones and recordings." Rep. Bob Carr (D-Mich.) speculated that while FAA may reduce its budget with the consolidation plan, some of those costs could be passed on to other federal agencies or state and local governments, many of which are currently offering to build facilities for the modernized FSS units in hopes of attracting federal employes to their communities.

AIRBUSINESS INC. ACQUIRES MONARCH AVIATION – AirBusiness Inc. has acquired Monarch Aviation Inc., a Cessna dealership in Grand Junction, Colo. John Pabst, Monarch's president, and vice presidents Brad Wollen and John Caldwell, will retain their positions, as will all other management personnel. Company name will be changed to Monarch AirBusiness Inc. Monarch recently expanded its sales territory to include Colorado, Wyoming, Utah and New Mexico.

AirBusiness earlier this year acquired Walston AirBusiness, a St. Louis-based Cessna dealership.

EDO WINS CONTRACT FOR STARSHIP I PROTOTYPE WORK – Fiber-Science Division of EDO Corp. has won a contract from Beech Aircraft for development and prototype manufacturing of structures for the new Beech composite construction Starship I aircraft *(BA, Oct. 10/113).* Both companies were reluctant to discuss details of the contract, but it is believed to be worth in excess of $5 million and involves construction of the main wing for the aircraft.

EDO's Fiber-Science Division, based in Salt Lake City, Utah, also had bid on the contract to construct the fuselage of the aircraft, but *BA* learned that contract will go to another Utah firm, Fiber Technology Corp. of Provo. That multi-phase award, valued at several million dollars, covers construction of the fuselage from pressure bulkhead to pressure bulkhead for six aircraft. Beech is expected to handle construction of the nose section of the aircraft itself, while Goldsworthy Engineering of Torrance, Calif. will manufacture the tail cone.

Robert Berrisford, president of EDO's division, said his company will provide "composite manufacturing technology and some prototype hardware for Starship I. In addition, we will be involved in the testing and validation of structural concepts and manufacturing processes for FAA certification."

SUBURBAN AIRLINES REPORTS LOWER PROFITS – Suburban Airlines Inc., Reading, Pa., reported lower profits for the three- and nine-month periods ended Sept. 30. The company reported net income of $285,789 on revenues of $4.7 million for the third quarter, compared to net income of $331,781 on revenues of $4.4 million during the same period last year. Net income for the first nine months of the year totaled $441,554 on revenues of $13.1 million, compared to profits of $796,662 on $12.2 million in revenues in the same period in 1983.

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FAA'S PROPOSED OFFICE AND FACILITY CONSOLIDATIONS

Facility Type	Planned Actions Through End FY 1986					Cumulative Cost Effectiveness of Actions Through FY 1993 *	Position Savings
	Close	Reduce	Open	Expand	Total Involved		
FSS	104	---	37	---	141	93.97	78
ATCT	52**	---	---	---	52	128.44	468
TRACON/ARTCC	7	---	---	6	13	4.09	43
AFSO	---	8	2	7	17	11.65	18
AVS	9	7	2	11	29	13.62	23
TOTAL	172	15	41	24	252	251.77	630

* Estimated, in millions of dollars.
** 35 towers are now temporarily closed.

FAA Chart

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COMMUTER CARRIERS TRAFFIC
8 Months 1983

	Passengers	% Change	Revenue Passenger Miles	% Change	Available Seat Miles	% Change	Load Factor 1983 %	1982
AeroMech	111,658	-14.9	13,834,096	-23.3	33,686,451	-	41.1	30.3
Air Illinois	189,879	10.7	28,215,008	10.2	66,104,311	7.4	42.7	41.6
Air Kentucky	51,780	-1.1	6,615,522	-13.3	16,537,285	-9.3	40.0	41.8
Air North	95,756	-	20,221,707	-	44,610,034	-	45.3	30.3
Air Virginia	134,180	51.1	25,886,797	64.1	-	-	30.3	38.3
Atlantic Southeast	225,739	79.6	33,156,554	110.4	88,096,478	113.0	37.6	38.1
Atlantis	53,748	0.1	8,943,670	13.2	21,365,779	11.9	41.9	41.4
B.A.S. Airlines	7,935	35.9	1,197,187	36.9	2,737,630	31.0	43.7	41.9
Bar Harbor	183,172	-0.7	-	-	-	-	30.3	30.3
Big Sky	24,392	-30.3	5,971,598	-33.8	18,152,311	-28.8	32.9	30.3
Cascade	216,222	10.9	46,040,764	18.6	88,679,624	8.9	51.9	47.7
Chaparral	80,516	0.4	15,467,000	2.4	-	-	30.3	30.3
Chautauqua	123,971	1.6	-	-	-	-	30.3	30.3
Christman Air System	13,721	-11.0	2,675,809	-1.0	9,276,856	7.0	28.8	30.3
Comair	190,366	35.1	36,709,242	57.5	92,384,282	69.3	39.7	42.7
Command Airways	132,480	12.9	18,390,335	12.8	41,078,100	10.7	44.8	43.9
Crown Airways	111,052	16.0	8,910,048	18.1	20,585,568	12.8	43.3	41.3
Cumberland Airlines	19,025	21.2	2,411,270	10.8	-	-	30.3	30.3
Direct Air	1,619	15.8	225,041	15.8	872,827	-	25.8	30.3
Dolphin Airways	122,533	104.7	26,652,407	116.9	-	-	30.3	30.3
Empire Airlines	454,419	26.5	105,832,953	26.2	223,426,638	35.9	47.4	51.0
Golden Pacific	7,753	-	945,746	-	3,711,319	-	25.5	30.3
Gull Air	57,661	60.8	-	-	-	-	30.3	30.3
Henson Aviation	481,613	15.0	65,104,368	18.8	134,735,450	35.9	48.3	55.3
*Holiday Airlines	11,165	8.5	-	-	-	-	61.9	51.0
*Inland Empire	55,942	1.3	-	-	-	-	75.3	49.4
Marco Island	23,885	4.2	2,221,305	1.0	-	-	30.3	30.3
Metro Airlines	405,947	-16.6	58,733,783	-8.5	120,497,014	-1.1	48.7	30.3
Mid Pacific	845,827	58.8	104,907,000	87.8	150,401,000	86.2	69.8	69.2
*Munz Northern	2,383	-33.8	309,000	-32.5	3,261,000	-12.8	9.5	12.2
PBA	609,813	20.8	72,546,832	27.6	137,616,569	36.0	52.7	56.2
Pacific Express	577,216	103.0	194,659,000	63.0	325,235,000	45.0	59.9	30.3
Penn. Commuter	260,081	10.4	28,377,549	6.4	49,357,171	6.7	57.5	57.6
Pilgrim Airlines	186,221	20.6	33,981,558	26.3	73,764,447	32.3	46.1	48.3
Pioneer Airlines	56,498	-3.8	15,503,074	-4.7	-	-	30.3	40.2
Precision Airlines	82,213	-2.4	9,849,698	-0.3	26,433,127	4.9	37.3	39.2
*Prinair	348,340	-23.9	35,971,074	-16.3	59,198,503	-19.8	60.8	58.2
*Rocky Mountain	231,368	-10.0	25,224,364	-0.4	68,469,271	4.6	36.8	38.7
Royal Hawaiian	148,648	26.6	11,989,505	23.5	23,163,112	19.4	51.8	50.1
Royale Airlines	137,190	-5.3	23,119,103	-2.9	57,431,627	12.7	40.3	46.7
Scenic	63,433	-24.2	11,670,866	-23.0	14,206,496	-19.7	82.2	85.7
Scheduled Skyways	150,679	16.0	32,191,000	11.8	66,760,000	10.7	48.2	47.7
Southeast Airlines	2,243	-	351,866	-	1,695,454	-	20.8	30.3
Suburban Airlines	187,698	5.9	15,910,874	13.5	39,832,289	18.8	39.9	41.8
Sunbird, Inc.	55,647	-	8,146,890	-	-	-	30.3	30.3
*Trans Air	14,938	-	2,960,'80	-	4,913,695	-	60.2	30.3
Trans Central	37,857	-	9,455,259	-	32,949,166	-	28.7	30.3
Valley Airline	2,652	49.9	458,064	57.5	1,111,581	39.8	41.2	36.6
Wings West	161,160	170.2	-	-	-	-	30.3	30.3
Wright Air Lines	160,050	10.6	28,883,000	45.3	76,727,000	47.9	37.6	38.3

* January - July only